

ASSOCIATED PRESS

30 November 1981

111A294

R A BYLQYVUIV A0765

FAM-TAFOYA;230

CIA OFFICIAL SAYS AGENCY NOT CONNECTED WITH TAFOYA

FORT COLLINS, COLO. (AP) - A CIA OFFICIAL TESTIFIED MONDAY THAT THE AGENCY HAD NO CONNECTION WITH EUGENE TAFOYA, WHO IS CHARGED WITH TRYING TO KILL A LIBYAN DISSIDENT.

HOWEVER, GEORGE MARLING, A REBUTTAL PROSECUTION WITNESS, ALSO TESTIFIED THAT IT IS AGENCY POLICY TO DENY KNOWLEDGE OF ANY CLASSIFIED OPERATION.

TAFOYA, WHO ADMITS SHOOTING FAISAL ZAGALLAI ON OCT. 14, 1980, SAID HE WENT TO THE COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY GRADUATE STUDENT'S APARTMENT THAT NIGHT TO DELIVER A MESSAGE FOR THE CIA. IT WARNED ZAGALLAI TO HALT HIS DISSIDENT ACTIVITIES.

THE FORMER GREEN BERET CONTENDS HE WAS HIRED BY A CIA AGENT IDENTIFIED ONLY AS "JOHN" AND THAT HE SHOT ZAGALLAI IN SELF-DEFENSE WHEN THE LIBYAN PULLED A GUN.

TAFOYA TESTIFIED THAT "JOHN" HAD NEVER PRODUCED CIA CREDENTIALS BUT KNEW DETAILS OF TAFOYA'S BACKGROUND THAT "COULD ONLY HAVE BEEN ASKED BY SOMEONE WHO HAD MY RECORDS OR HAD KNOWLEDGE OF ME."

HE SAID THE INFORMATION WAS INCLUDED IN HIS EMPLOYMENT APPLICATION TO THE CIA, WHICH HAD BEEN REJECTED.

MARLING, THE CIA'S CHIEF RECORDS-KEEPER FOR CLANDESTINE OPERATIONS, TESTIFIED THERE WAS NO RECORD OF ANY INVOLVEMENT BY TAFOYA IN A SECRET OR OVERT CIA OPERATION.

HE SAID THAT AFTER THE SHOOTING OF ZAGALLAI, HE HAD REQUESTED A THOROUGH SEARCH OF ALL RECORDS OF THE CIA'S OPERATIONS, BOTH CLANDESTINE AND OVERT.

AP-NY-11-30 2241EST